I claim:

1   1.   A method for playing a game, comprising:

2   creating a plurality of groups that each comprises one or more items, wherein each of the

3   groups is associated with a unique indicium, wherein each of the items has an identifying feature

4   associated with one of the indicium, and wherein each of the one or more items is associated with

5   one or more values;

6   receiving one or more selections from a player that each comprise one or more characters,

7   wherein each of the characters in each selection corresponds to one of the indicium;

8   determining a performance value for each group over a period of time;

9   determining a sequence of the plurality of groups based upon the performance value for

10   the period of time; and

11   determining a score for each of the one or more selections, wherein the score determines a

12   basis for winning the game.

1   2.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising the following step:

2   determining a game period associated with the game, wherein the game period has a start

3   point and an end point.

1   3.   The method of Claim 2, further comprising the following step:

2   retrieving the one or more values associated with each item over the game period.

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1   4.   The method of Claim 3, further comprising the following step:

2   determining a change value for each item in each of the plurality of groups over the game

3   period.

1   5.   The method of Claim 4, further comprising the following step:

2   determining a winning selection from the one or more selections based on the score

3   associated with each of the one or more selections.

1   6.   The method of Claim 5, further comprising the following step:

2   transmitting a notification to a winning player associated with the winning selection that

3   the winning player is eligible for a prize.

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1   7.   A method for playing a game, comprising:

2   creating a plurality of groups that each comprises one or more items, wherein each of the

3   groups is associated with a unique indicium, wherein each of the items has an identifying feature

4   associated with one of the indicium, and wherein each of the one or more items is associated with

5   one or more values, wherein each of the one or more values fluctuates over time;

6   determining a game period associated with the game, wherein the game period has a start

7   point and an end point;

8   retrieving the one or more values associated with each item over the game period;

9   receiving one or more selections from one or more players that each comprise one or more

10   characters, wherein each of the characters in each selection corresponds to one of the indicium,

11   and wherein each selection is associated with the game period;

12   determining a change value for each item in each of the plurality of groups over the game

13   period;

14   determining a performance value for each group over the game period that reflects the

15   change value for each item in each group over the game period;

16   determining a sequence of the plurality of groups based upon the performance value for

17   the game period;

18   determining a score for each of the one or more selections, wherein the score reflects the

19   performance values for each group associated with the each unique indicia in the selection for each

20   of the one or more selections;

21   determining a winning selection from the one or more selections based on the score

22   associated with each of the one or more selections; and

23   transmitting a notification to a winning player associated with the winning selection that

24   the winning player is eligible for a prize.

1   8.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the items in each group are updated on periodic

2   basis based on a comparison of data values and change values over a prior period associated with

3   each item having an identifying feature that corresponds to the indicium associated with the group.

1   9.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the identity of each item in each group is made

2   available to the one or more players before the start point.

1   10.   The method of Claim 7, wherein each of the unique indicia is one or more

2   alphabetic letters.

1   11.   The method of Claim 7, wherein an indicium that comprises more than one

2   characters represents each of the characters it comprises.

1   12.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the identifying feature of each item is associated

2   with the indicium corresponding to the identifying feature of the group of which the item is a

3   member.

1   13   The method of Claim 7, wherein the game period is one member selected from the

2   group consisting of: one day, one hour, one week, and a configurable duration with the start point

3   indicated by one of the one or more players.

1   14.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: upon receipt of the one or more

2   selections, determining if the one or more selections meet a specified set of criteria.

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1   15.   The method of Claim 7, wherein each change value reflects the percentage

2   change between the data value to which the change value is associated with at the start point and

3   the data value to which the change value is associated with a current time.

1   16.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the performance value for each of the one or

2   more groups reflects an average change value for each item in the group.

1   17.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the score for each of the one or more selections

2   reflects an average performance value for each unique indicium in the selection.

1   18.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: storing the one or more values, the

2   changes values associated with each item, the performance value for each group, and the sequence

3   of the plurality of groups for the game period in persistent storage.

1   19.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: creating one or more graphical

2   displays depicting the one or more data values and change values associated with each item.

1   20.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: creating one or more graphical

2   displays depicting the performance values associated with the one or more groups.

1   21.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: creating one or more graphical

2   displays depicting the sequence of the plurality of groups.

1   22.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: creating one or more graphical

2   displays depicting the score associated with the one or more selections.

1   23.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: creating one or more graphical

2   displays depicting the results of a number of previous games.

1   24.   method of Claim 7, further comprising: creating one or more graphical displays

2   depicting the current odds of wagers of one or more selections.

1   25.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: creating one or more graphical

2   displays depicting a current estimation of jackpots paid to the one or more players with a winning

3   selection.

1   26.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising displaying the one or more graphical

2   displays on a graphical user interface to the one or more players.

1   27.   The method of Claim 7, wherein one or more selections are received from the

2   player through a graphical user interface, wherein displays of the scores of each of the selections

3   are created and displayed to the user on a graphical interface.

1   28.   The method of Claim 7, wherein a number of selections are chosen by the player

2   from a list of one or more sets of selections displayed on a graphical user interface, wherein

3   displays of the scores of each of the selections are created and displayed to the user on a graphical

4   interface.

1   29.   The method of Claim 7, wherein each of the one or more selections is supplied

2   by each of the one or more players through a graphical user interface.

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1   30.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the winning selections are the selections with

2   the highest or lowest scores at the end point of the game period.

1   31.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the step of determining the winning selections

2   among each of the one or more selections comprises grouping the selections based on the number

3   of unique characters included in each selection.

1   32.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising:

2   receiving a set of one or more tournament selections, wherein each tournament selection may be

3   submitted by a different player through a graphical user interface, wherein each tournament

4   selection comprises one or more characters, and wherein each of the characters in each tournament

5   selection corresponds of one of the indicium;

6   grouping the set of one or more tournament selections into a plurality of brackets, wherein the

7   plurality of brackets comprises a series of levels;

8   determining a tournament score for each of the one or more tournament selections in the first level

9   bracket; and

10   determining which of the one or more tournament selections advances to the next level of the

11   bracket based upon the tournament score of each tournament selections in the first level bracket

1   33.   The method of Claim 7, wherein each selection further comprises a bet value and

2   a bet type, wherein the bet value is an amount of money that the player intends to bet on the

3   selection, and wherein the bet type is a type of bet which the player intends to place using the

4   selection.

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1   34.   The method of Claim 7, wherein winning wager selections are determined by a

2   degree of match between the sequence of indicia of the selection and the sequence of indicia at the

3   ending time of a game period.

1   35.   The method of Claim 7, further comprising: transmitting a notification to a

2   winning player associated with the winning selection that the winning player is eligible for a prize.

1   36.   The method of Claim 7, wherein each item is an openly traded instrument, and

2   wherein each data value is a price of the openly traded instrument to which the data value is

3   associated.

1   37.   The method of Claim 36, wherein the identifying feature of each item is a first

2   letter of a ticker symbol associated with an openly traded instrument.

1   38.   The method of Claim 36, wherein the set of indicium associated with each group

2   correspond to the following groups of letters: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, JK, L, M, N, OQ, P, R, S,

3   T, UV, and WXYZ.

1   39.   The method of Claim 36, wherein the performance value of a group for the game

2   period is based, at least in part, on an average price change of each openly traded security of which

3   the group comprises.

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1   40.   The method of Claim 36, wherein determining the performance value for each

2   group further comprises ignoring trades of each openly traded instrument associated with an item

3   in each group which cause a price associated with the openly traded instrument to change beyond a

4   specified threshold.

1   41.   The method of Claim 7, wherein each item corresponds to data related to a

2   temperature in a city.

1   42.   The method of Claim 7, wherein each item corresponds to data related to a sports

2   statistic.

1   43.   A system for playing a game based upon fluctuations of the stock market

2   comprising:

3   a source of data related to the price of stock;

4   a database comprising data related to the fluctuation in the price of stock over time;

5   a game server comprising the following:

6   - an optional update module;

7   - an optional race module;

8   - an optional contest module;

9   - an optional display module;

10   - an optional user interface module; and

11   one or more user interfaces.

1   44.   The system of Claim 43 wherein the source of data related to the price of stock

2   further comprises a real-time connection to current stock prices.

1   45.   The system of Claim 43 wherein the database comprising data related to the

2   fluctuation in the price of stock over time further comprises data related to random or

3   predetermined play selections made by a user during play of the game.

1   46.   The system of Claim 43 wherein the one or more user interfaces is selected from

2   the group consisting of a web browser, a touch screen, a television screen, a Palm pilot or other

3   PDA, a personal computer such as including a monitor, keyboard and mouse, a cellular telephone

4   display, a pager, an electronic ticketing device, and a screen displayable in a kiosk or other

5   standalone terminal.

1   47.   An optionally web server-based game based upon fluctuations of the stock

2   market comprising:

3   obtaining a source of data related to the price of stock, such as over the internet via

4   connection to on-line stock market websites;

5   creating a database comprising data related to the fluctuation in the price of stock over

6   time as well as data related to random or predetermined play selections made by a user, via one or

7   more user interfaces, during play of the game; and

8   communicating the database to a game server comprising the following:

9   - an optional update module;

10   - an optional race module;

11   - an optional contest module;

12   - an optional display module;

13   - an optional user interface module.

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